64. A thermally hardenable surface comprising the hardenable mass according to claim 25.

65. A hardenable mass produced by the process according to claim 25.---

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing amendment is respectfully requested prior to examination of the application.

Applicants respectfully note that, upon entry of the present amendment, the specification will be amended, and claims 1-24 will be canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein, and claims 25-65 will be added. Of the newly-added claims, claims 25 and 41 are independent.

Applicants further note that the present amendment is being presented to even more clearly recite Applicants' invention by placing the claimed subject matter even more in accordance with standard U.S. practice and idiomatic English, and no estoppel should be deemed attached thereto.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
Frank LEHMANN et al.

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APPENDIX

Marked-up copy of replacement paragraph **[0001]**:

[0001] The present invention relates to the field of chemistry and concerns hardenable masses, such as are used, for example, for the production of coatings, and a process for their production and processing.

Marked-up copy of replacement paragraph **[0005]**:

[0005] By using [cross linkers] cross-linkers containing uretdione groups (e.g., DE 23 12 391 OS, EP 045 998 A1, EP 669 353 A1), the possibility exists of avoiding such emissions of low-molecular substances. Due to the low level of reactivity of the internally blocked isocyanate groups, the use of corresponding hardeners containing uretdione groups has been limited up to the present day because the temperatures of greater than 160°C necessary for hardening [greater than 160°C] are too high and/or the time necessary for hardening is too long. In view of the costs of energy and the possibility of coating thermolabile substrates (e.g., plastic or wood), it is necessary to increase the reactivity of such systems.

Marked-up copy of replacement paragraph **[0011]**:

[0011] It was possible to attain [this object] the objects of the present invention by providing the masses according to the invention. The masses according to the invention are based on the fact that, under the conditions according to the invention, Lewis acid catalysts, in particular metalorganic compounds, accelerate the transformation of uretdione groups with hydroxyl groups

so strongly that, with their help and using the known uretdione hardeners, masses can be produced that already harden at comparatively low temperatures in the same amount of time or at the same temperatures in a considerably shorter period of time than the masses containing uretdione hardeners that have been known up to now.

Marked-up copy of replacement paragraphs **[0015]** and **[0016]**:

[0015] The component B) contained in the mass according to the invention is a polyaddition compound that is present in a liquid or viscous form above the reaction or treatment temperature that contains [uretdion] uretdione groups and, optionally, free isocyanate groups based on aliphatic and/or cycloaliphatic diisocyanates, in particular those based on 1,6-hexamethylene diisocyanate (HDI), 1-isocyanato-3,3,5-trimethyl-5-isocyanatomethylcyclohexane (IPDI), 4,4'-diisocyanatodicyclohexylmethane, 1,3 diisocyanato-2(4)-methylcyclohexane, or any unspecified mixture of these diisocyanates, with HDI and IPDI being preferred.

[0016] The component B) is used in the masses according to the invention in such amounts that, on every hydroxyl group of the bonding agent component A), 0.8 to 2.4, preferably 0.9 to 2.2 isocyanate groups of the component B) occur; isocyanate groups of component B) is to be understood as the sum of isocyanate groups present in dimeric form as [uretdion] uretdione groups and free isocyanate groups.

Marked-up copy of replacement paragraph **[0018]**:

[0018] Catalysts C) that may be used are metalorganic compounds of the general formula

$$R_2MeX_2$$

in which

Me means metal,

R means alkyl residue, and

X means [carboxyl] carboxylate residue

as well as metalorganic compounds of the general formula

$$R_2MeY_2$$

in which

Me means metal,

R means alkyl residue, and

Y means alcoholate residue

as well as metalorganic compounds of the general formula

$$Z_nMe$$

in which

Me means metal,

Z means acteylacetonate residue, and

n = 2 or 3,

or any unspecified mixtures of such metalorganic catalysts.